Fifth expedition to the Antarctica

*151. SHRIMATI KRISHNA KAUL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the fifth expedition to the Antarctica is likely to start in November, 1985; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI RAJIV GANDHI): (a) Yes, Sir. The Fifth Expedition is likely to commence in December, 1985.

(b) The details of the expedition are being finalised.

Eradication of untouchability

*152. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made assessment to know the achievements towards the eradication of untouchability in the country and how far the State Governments have played their role to achieve the objective;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof indicating the State Governments which are lagging behind and the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps Government are contemplating to develop social awareness in the country in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. B. CHAVAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Such an assessment is done annually through the mechanism provided in Section 15-A of the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955. Sub-section (4) of the aforesaid Section of the P.C.R. Act, 1955 has made it obligatory for the Central Government to place on the Table of each House of Parliament every year a report on the measures taken by itself and by the State Governments to achieve the objective of eradication of untouchabilty. The Annual Report on the P.C.R. Act, 1955 for the year 1983 has been laid on the Table of Rajya Sabha on 28th March, 1985 and on the Table of Lok Sabha on 10th April, 1985. This Report contains information regarding the measures taken by the Central Government as well as the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations.

(c) The Central Government is taking necessary measures to inform and educate the people with a view to creating an awarencess among them about the evils of untouchability through different media units like All India Radio, Doordarshan, Exhibitions hoardings, wall-paintings, booklets etc.

Air India flight on New York-London-Bombay-Trivandrum route

*153. SHRI M. M. JACOB: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to operate an Air India flight on New York -London -Bombay -Trivandrum route;

(b) if so, by when; and

(c) if not, whether there is any proposal of introducing a direct flight from Trivandrum to London and New York taking into consideration the large number of Indians from Kerala working in these countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) No Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No such proposal is presently under consideration of the Government.

Technology for enrichment of uranium

*154. PROF. B. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California has developed technology for uranium enrichment by the Atomic Vapour Laser Isotope Separation Process (AVILS);

(b) whether Government propose to speed up the development of this new technology in view of the superiority and cost effectiveness of this technology over the earlier gaseous diffusion technique and centrifugal technique which is useful for future nuclear power plants; and

(c) whether such a project has already been undertaken by the Atomic Energy Commission if so, how long it is expected to take to develop this AVILS technology in the research laboratories of BARC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, SPACE AND ELECTRONICS (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Bhabha Atomic Research Centre keeps itself abreast of different types of enrichment methods.

New Indian Airlines Services in Southern Region

*155. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have recently introduced a few new Indian Airlines services in Southern Region; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ASHOK GEHLOT): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In the Summer Schedule effective 1st June, 1985, Indian Airlines have introduced the following new airlinks in the Southern Region :—

(i) Thrice a week B-737 service on the Madras-Banglore-Ahmedabad Bangalore-Madras sectors; and

(ii) Thrice a week Avro service on the Hyderabad-Pune-Bombay-Pune-Hyderabad sectors.

In addition, a daily B-737 service on the sectors Delhi-Hyderabad-Madras-Hyderabad-Delhi has been introduced and the frequency of the B-737 service on sectors Delhi-Goa-Cochin-Trivandrum and back has been stepped up from four days a week to every day.

Drawbacks in implementation of the IRDP

*156. SHRI NIRMAL CHATTERJEE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Planning Commission have found some drawbacks in implementation of the Integrated Rural Development Programme; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) and (b) The Evaluation Study undertaken by the Programme Evaluation Organisation (PEO) of the Planning Commission covered 33 districts in 16 States. The sample size of beneficiaries was 1170 and the number of blocks covered 66. The PEO Report has shown that the IRDP programme has had a positive impact on the income and living standards of the beneficiary house-holds surveyed.

One of the more important findings of the Evaluation Report is that out of the 868 sample beneficiary households initially having an annual income of less than Rs. 3,500, 49.42% were able to achieve an annual income level of Rs. 3,500 and above after their coverage under IRDP. It has also shown that the general awarness of the programme was high among the people. Nearly 90% of the selected sample beneficiaries felt that they had benefited from the programme. A little over 88% of the beneficiaries reported that their income had increased as a result of their coverage under IRDP and almost 90% of